



March 2010

Child Welfare by the Numbers Calendar 2009

(515) 281-4848

Assessments, abuse findings

- 25,814 assessments for child abuse in calendar 2009, up 11 percent from 2008. Of those:
 - ✓ 16,947 no finding of abuse.
 - ✓ 7,011 'founded' abuses, compares to 6,141 in '08, 7,096 in '07, 7,941 in '06.
 - ✓ 1,856 'confirmed' abuses (minor and isolated, perpetrator not placed on registry) about same as '08.
- 10,148 children were subject of 'founded' abuse (8,779 in '08, 10,358 in '07, 11,263 in '06)
- 2,284 children were subject of 'confirmed' abuse (numbers similar for past five years).
- 52 percent of abused or neglected children were age 5 or younger (similar to past years).
- Of all abuses in 2009:
 - ✓ 81 percent is neglect (denial of critical care), up from 79 percent in '08.
 - ✓ 9 percent is physical, down from 11 percent in '08.
 - ✓ 4 percent is sexual, same as '08.
 - ✓ 3.6 percent is presence of illegal drugs in body, down slightly from '08.

Assessing abuse, caseload

Allegations of abuse are first screened by regional intake units. DHS is transitioning to one statewide unit in 2010. Accepted intakes are investigated by DHS assessors. When abuse is founded, a separate group of DHS social workers supervise the ongoing care and services for children and their families. Those services are performed by non-government social service agencies. The monthly average DHS caseload in 2009:

- ✓ 222 DHS assessors who were assigned an average of 11 new cases a month.
- ✓ 449 DHS social workers with an average child welfare caseload of 25. A goal is for these workers to visit with every child and every child's parents every month. These workers also have other duties, such as licensing activities, adult services, and home studies.

In December 2009 the DHS was assisting:

- ✓ 5,618 children in out-of-home placements. Most were in family foster homes, relative's homes, group care, or shelters. First goal is safety. Second goal is to reunify.
- ✓ 5,750 children at home where families are receiving counseling or other services. Includes 1,209 children in trial home visits.

Highlights, results of Iowa's child-welfare redesign launched in 2005, 2006

- Focus DHS attention on children with highest risk.
- Provide optional, free, and "non-DHS" help for families where re-abuse risk is low.
- Reduce racial disparities. Gap is narrowing for both African American and Native Americans.
- Focus on best-practice results (lowering rates of re-abuse, increasing rate of speedy reunification, etc.).
- Boost service for older foster youth. New program for "aged out" youth serves hundreds.
- Transparent results. <https://dhssecure.dhs.state.ia.us/digitaldashboard/> In quarter ending 12/09:
 - ✓ 91.7 percent of all abused or neglected children are abuse-free in following six months.
 - ✓ 99.8 percent of abused or neglected children placed in foster care remain safe from abuse.
- Engage families in plan for improvement, especially via family team meetings and parent mentors.

The cost of child welfare: FY09 actual expenditures

Major Services	State dollars	All other dollars	Total*	Average Monthly Number Served (FY09)
Family centered services	- \$ 7.8	\$19.4	\$27.2	4,948 families served (at least one child per family)
Family foster care	- \$12.3	\$11.2	\$23.5	2,297 children in formal (not relative) foster care
Group care	- \$23.9	\$ 9.7	\$33.6	926 children in highly structured group settings
Adoption subsidies	- \$32.3	\$33.9	\$66.2	8,388 (subsidies paid until adopted child reaches 18)
Aged-out program	- \$ 2.9	\$ 0.0	\$ 2.9	294 (stipends, counseling help youth up to age 21)
Shelter care	- \$ 7.5	\$ 1.5	\$ 9.0	182 children served in average month
DHS social workers	- \$31.3	\$30.6	\$61.9	* millions